

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claims 5, 10, 13 and 14 without prejudice to or disclaimer of their subject matter.

Please AMEND claims 1, 6 and 7, as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus which can be connected to a sheet processing apparatus having a plurality of sheet storage trays of which positions are changeable, and has a plurality of operation modes including at least two modes from among a copy mode, an image communication mode, and a printer mode, said apparatus, comprising:

first setting means for setting a relationship between each of operation modes and each of sheet storage trays, where, when the image forming apparatus works in an operation mode, a sheet storage tray assigned to the working operation mode is moved to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus;

second setting means for manually setting one operation mode from among the operation modes as an auto-clear mode and storing information specifying the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode;

determination means for determining whether a no-operation state by an operator continues for a predetermined time after the processing of an operation mode has been completed;

auto-clear operation means for automatically setting the image forming apparatus to a predetermined operation mode from among the plurality of operation modes the

operation mode set as the auto-clear mode on the basis of a determination result of said determination means; and

control means for, in response to said auto-clear operation means ~~setting the image forming apparatus to the predetermined operation mode~~, controlling the sheet processing apparatus so as to change the position of a sheet storage tray, which is assigned to the ~~predetermined operation mode~~ as the auto-clear mode, to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus, so that the sheet storage tray can store a sheet even if not receiving a job data for the ~~predetermined operation mode~~ set as the auto-clear mode.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a user interface including a display device commonly used in the respective modes, wherein in response to said auto-clear operation means setting the image forming apparatus to the predetermined operation mode, display control is performed to display a window corresponding to the predetermined operation mode.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising setting means for selecting a mode to be set to by said auto-clear operation means.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A control method for an image forming apparatus which can be connected to a sheet processing apparatus having a plurality of sheet storage trays of which positions are changeable, and has a plurality of operation modes including at least two modes from among a copy mode, an image communication mode, and a printer mode, said method comprising:

a step of setting a relationship between each of operation modes and each of sheet storage trays, where, when the image forming apparatus works in an operation mode, a sheet storage tray assigned to the working operation mode is moved to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus;

a step of manually setting one operation mode from among the operation modes as an auto-clear mode and storing information specifying the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode;

a step of determining whether a no-operation state by an operator continues for a predetermined time after the processing of an operation mode has been completed;

a step of automatically setting the image forming apparatus to a ~~predetermined operation mode from among the plurality of operation modes~~ the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode on the basis of a determination result in the determination step; and

a step of, in response to the operation mode ~~setting the image forming apparatus to the predetermined operation mode in the operation mode shifting step,~~ controlling the sheet processing apparatus so as to change the position of ~~[[a]]~~ the sheet storage tray, which is assigned to the ~~predetermined~~ operation mode as the auto-clear mode, to a sheet discharge

position of the image forming apparatus, so that the sheet storage tray can store a sheet even if not receiving a job data for the ~~predetermined~~ operation mode set as the auto-clear mode.

7. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program for causing an image forming apparatus which can be connected to a sheet processing apparatus having a plurality of sheet storage trays of which positions are changeable and has a plurality of operation modes including at least two modes from among a copy mode, an image communication mode, and a printer mode, to execute the following steps, comprising:

a step of setting a relationship between each of operation modes and each of sheet storage trays, where, when the image forming apparatus works in an operation mode, a sheet storage tray assigned to the working operation mode is moved to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus;

a step of manually setting one operation mode from among the operation modes as an auto-clear mode and storing information specifying the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode;

a step of determining whether a no-operation state by an operator continues for a predetermined time after the processing of an operation mode has been completed;

a step of automatically setting the image forming apparatus to ~~a predetermined operation mode from among the plurality of operation modes~~ the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode on the basis of a determination result in the determination step; and

a step of, in response to the operation mode ~~setting the image forming apparatus to the predetermined operation mode in the operation mode shifting step,~~ controlling

the sheet processing apparatus so as to change the position of [[a]] the sheet storage tray, which is assigned to the ~~predetermined~~ operation mode as the auto-clear mode, to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus, so that the sheet storage tray can store a sheet even if not receiving job data for the ~~predetermined~~ operation mode set as the auto-clear mode.

8-14. (Cancelled)